

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

Office of Public Affairs
Media RelationsWashington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.govFOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 19, 1999

Washington, D.C. -- Mrs. Tipper Gore will join Secretary of Veterans Affairs Togo D. West Jr. in cheering on more than 350 severely disabled veterans as they take on the challenge of skiing the Rocky Mountains at the 13th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, March 21-26, in Crested Butte, Colorado.

With a lifelong commitment to helping people with disabilities to achieve, Mrs. Gore said she is anxious to witness firsthand this successful event that has done so much to change the lives of veterans with disabilities. "This clinic is proof to disabled veterans, who have given so much in service to this country, and to all Americans, that there should be no barriers to living life to the fullest. Their success at this event gives the veterans the confidence to return to their communities and become active and productive members of society. To me, it demonstrates what is truly great about this country," Mrs. Gore said.

Mrs. Gore plans to celebrate with the veterans on Race Day (Friday, March 26) as each veteran caps off the week by taking a run on a downhill slalom course. She will present some with medals of participation, and plans to ski with first-timers and their instructors, to share with them the exhilaration of conquering the mountain. Mrs. Gore and Secretary West will address the veterans at the closing ceremony that evening.

The largest event of its kind in the country, the clinic is sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Disabled American Veterans (DAV). It is open to all U.S. military veterans with spinal-cord injury or disease, certain neurological conditions, orthopedic amputations, visual impairments or other disabilities. Participants learn adaptive Alpine and Nordic skiing and are introduced to a variety of adaptive activities and sports including a self-defense class taught by the U.S. Secret Service.

With programs in its medical facilities nationwide, VA is a recognized leader in rehabilitative and recreational therapy. DAV is a nonprofit, congressionally-chartered veterans service organization with a membership of more than one million war-time disabled veterans.

For further information, contact:**Roxanne Fischetti**
VA Public Affairs
(202) 273-5736**Dave Autry**
DAV Communications
(202) 554-3501**Gina Kroft**
Crested Butte Mountain Resort
(970) 349-2201